4.3.1.8 Socioeconomics

This section analyzes the socioeconomic effects of the pit disassembly/conversion facility for each of the candidate sites. Only the sites with the greatest socioeconomic effects are discussed. The effects at all sites are found in the Supplemental Socioeconomic Data Report (Socio 1996).

Regional Economy Characteristics. Constructing the pit disassembly/conversion facility at any of the sites analyzed would generate employment and income increases within the affected REA. Constructing the facility would require 185 workers in the peak year of construction at any site. The largest increase in regional employment (much less than 1 percent) among the sites analyzed would be at INEL. A total of 376 new jobs (185 direct and 191 indirect) would be generated and regional unemployment would fall from 5.4 to 5.1 percent. The largest increase in regional per capita income would also occur at INEL, but the increase would be much less than 1 percent over No Action (Socio 1996a).

Operating the facility would generate greater socioeconomic changes than would construction, due to the larger, more permanent workforce. A workforce of 830 would be required for full operation at any site. Implementing the alternative at INEL would generate the largest increases in regional employment (about 2 percent) and per capita income (about 1 percent). A total of 3,056 new jobs (830 direct and 2,226 indirect) would be generated by the operational activities and regional unemployment would fall to 3.8 percent (Socio 1996a).

Population and Housing. At all of the sites analyzed, construction employment requirements would be met by the available resident labor force, but some in-migrating workers would be needed to fill more specialized positions during operations. Project-related population increases would be greatest if the facility is located at Pantex. However, this increase would be less than 1 percent over No Action population projections. Housing units, in excess of existing vacancies, may be required at all of the sites analyzed, except NTS and ORR, to accommodate the population increase. The greatest increase would be needed in the INEL ROI but this would be less than 1 percent over No Action estimates. Historic housing construction rates indicate that there would be sufficient housing units available to accommodate the population growth at all of the sites analyzed (Socio 1996a).

Community Services. During construction, there would be minimal impacts to community services in the ROIs of any of the sites analyzed. However, operation of the facility would slightly increase the demand for community services. The effects of population increase due to in-migrating workers during operations would be minor at all sites analyzed. The following discussion focuses on the Pantex and INEL ROIs, which are expected to experience the greatest increases in demand for community services among the sites analyzed.

To maintain the No Action student-to-teacher ratio of 16.3:1 in the Pantex ROI, 18 new teachers would be needed during operation of the proposed facility. The increase in teacher requirements, however, would be distributed over several school districts in the ROI; therefore, no single district would be significantly affected (Socio 1996a).

To maintain the No Action service level of 1.6 sworn police officers per 1,000 persons, only 2 new police officers would be needed in the INEL ROI. Five additional firefighters would be required to sustain the No Action service level of 2.3 firefighters per 1,000 persons in the Pantex ROI (Socio 1996a).

Projected hospital occupancy rates would increase slightly over No Action levels at each site analyzed. However, projected capacities would be capable of accommodating these small increases in patient load. To maintain the No Action service level of 1.2 physicians per 1,000 persons, only 2 additional physicians would be required in the INEL ROI during operation (Socio 1996a).

Local Transportation. Construction of the pit disassembly/conversion facility would not affect the level of service on the local road segments analyzed for any of the sites. However, traffic generated from facility

operations at INEL would affect the level of service on one road segment. U.S. 20/26 from U.S. 26 East to Idaho State Route 22/33 would experience a drop in level of service from B to C (Socio 1996a).